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Terry-Cloth Mother, Wire Mother Gwyn McVay

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Gwyn McVay

TERRY-CLOTH MOTHER, WIRE MOTHER

after Alexander Calder

It is never herself in the title, always the two boys, no mention of her grinning coyote face, her long body arching like a wire arrow, the tungsten filament of a light bulb. This is no way to make herself rich and famous. Circus wolf performer, she stands bowlegged on loopy toes and, grimacing, suckles the founders of Rome. Her teats hang like door-knobs from her spine. Each boy's penis is a wooden knob, just like their mother's nipples. Romy's dangles but Remy's juts from his thigh as he stretches his arms toward her, monkey in the experiment, choosing the wire mother over the terry-cloth mother because the wire one provides food. His mouth is an O forever, pinched loop of hunger whose wanting roundness scares her. The two of them below her, lost in her absence of ribs.